



THE COUNTER NARRATIVE

Reframing Success of High Achieving
Black and Latino Males in Los Angeles County

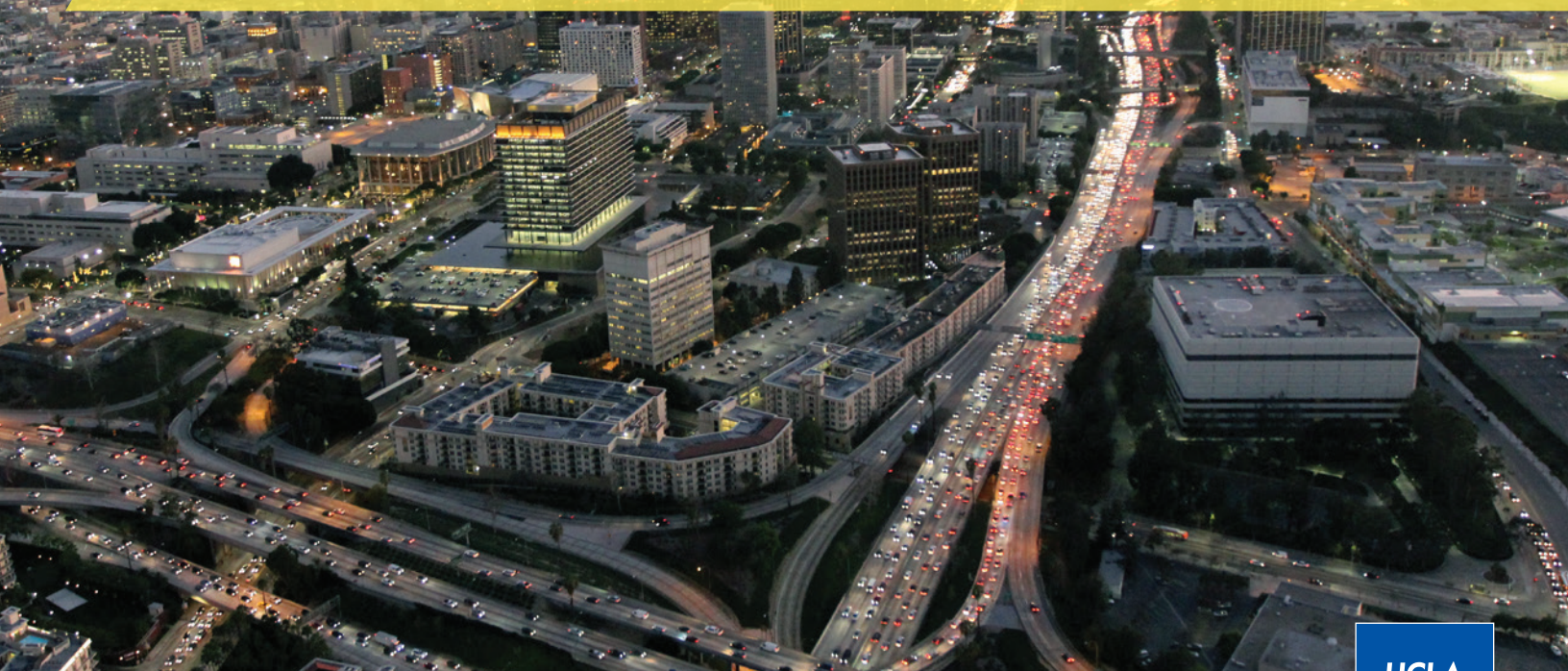


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STATEMENT FROM DR. ROBERT K. ROSS

PRESIDENT & CEO
THE CALIFORNIA ENDOWMENT

On behalf of our Board of Directors and staff at the California Endowment, I am pleased to convey our appreciation and admiration for the leadership and work of Dr. Tyrone Howard in this report on high-achieving Black and Latino males across our region. Those of us who occupy roles and positions of civic leadership have a tendency to suffer from “deficit-attention disorder”—rather than the syndrome of Attention-Deficit Disorder that is often ascribed to too many of our young men: we hyper-focus on the deficits and “broken-ness” plaguing these young people and fail to look under the hood of the success stories emerging right under our noses. In this report, Dr. Howard has chosen to do just that: recognizing the assets and jewels of success and leadership exhibited by young men of color against incredible odds, and teasing out and organizing the lessons to inform practice, policy, and the investment of resources in the years ahead.

Thanks to you and your team, Dr. Howard, for illuminating the path of the work needed to improve the opportunities for our young men of color. This report represents an important development for the field.





STATEMENT FROM MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS

SUPERVISOR, 2ND DISTRICT,
LOS ANGELES COUNTY

It is obvious in some of the rhetoric from the 2016 presidential campaign that negative stereotypes persist about young Black and Latino men despite abundant evidence to the contrary.

This study, conducted with utmost professionalism by Dr. Tyrone Howard and his staff, shines a light on success stories that have too often been omitted from narratives about the Black and Latino experience.

By deepening our understanding of how boys and men of color overcome poverty, marginalization, disparity in social safety nets, and institutionalized racism, this study will enable us to chart a better course for future generations.

We must continue to build on proven pathways to success, and to help as many people as possible embark on that journey — Black, Latino, or otherwise. Promising programs, practices, and policies must be brought to the forefront, not only locally but nationally.

It would be impossible for any one person, school district, business organization, or government to address the myriad facets of this issue singlehandedly. The effort will require a united front, a partnership that spans across many sectors and jurisdictions.

The important research conducted by Dr. Howard and his team gives us a worthy starting point, and I extend to them my gratitude and congratulations.

STATEMENT FROM DISTINGUISHED DEAN MARCELO SUAREZ-OROZCO

The Counter Narrative is the study we have been waiting for. Scholars, policy makers, teachers, philanthropists, parents and students alike need to hear the good news and fully take in the lessons learned. Tyrone Howard, a giant in our field, masterfully pivots from risk to resilience. And the results are powerful indeed. *The Counter Narrative* will become an indispensable statement for all to ponder and, at the same time, a tool for moving the needle from fatalism and despair to engagement and excellence.

The facts at stake are clear: California cannot remain the fifth largest economy in the world without harvesting the talents, dreams, and ambitions of its most-diverse-ever cohort of young students in history. Let me be clear, in our minority majority state, where boys and girls of color are the fastest growing sector of the child, adolescent, and emerging adult population, there is no happy California future without a happy future for our young men of color.

Albert Camus, the great Algerian novelist, essayist, and winner of the Nobel Prize, once said where there is no hope, “we have to invent it.” In these dystopic times when black young men are felled with impunity and political leaders routinely victimize Latino young men, the *Counter Narrative* is a beacon of light. If you are in the business of inventing hope, I urge you to study the *Counter Narrative* and learn its lessons.

—Marcelo M. Suárez-Orozco, the UCLA Wasserman Dean & Distinguished Professor of Education is author, most recently, of *Global Migration, Diversity, and Civic Education: Improving Policy and Practice* with James A. Banks & Miriam Ben-Peretz. (New York, Teachers College Press, 2016).”



UCLA
Ed & IS

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR



Tyrone C. Howard, Ph.D.

Investing in young people is one of the most important tasks that any society can undertake. Taking the necessary steps to ensure that all young people have the adequate support, skills, knowledge, and dispositions to thrive in a democratic and diverse society is essential in the 21st century. However, it is imperative that we recognize that not all young people start from the same place. Many have a host of accumulated disadvantages brought about through structural inequality, historical exclusion of certain groups, poverty, racism, sexism, and a host of other social toxins. Hence, it is even more crucial that we as a society put forth concerted efforts to assist those individuals who are most vulnerable in our society. To that end, this report focuses on two of the more disenfranchised groups in our society today—Black and Latino young men. Black and Brown young men continue to face a myriad of obstacles in their quest to be successful contributing members of society; and that is precisely why we focus on them in this work.

Growing up as a young boy in Compton, I was fortunate to grow up with many peers who possessed unbridled talent, uncanny intellect, and incredible drive to be successful in any domain possible. However, due to a number of conditions, I witnessed far too many of them fail to reach their full potential. It is painful to reflect on the countless numbers of young men who fell prey to many of the challenges that young men of color across this nation face every day: undereducation, joblessness, incarceration, hopelessness, and, for too many of them, premature death. The famous abolitionist Frederick Douglass once said that it is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men. It is with that charge that we put forth this effort. Our young men are in need of the appropriate supports to see their development occur in the most optimal set of environments, in order for them to become viable contributors to their families and communities. We must raise the bar on the types of support that we afford our young men. I am a firm believer that we are the product of other people's expectations. We must raise the bar of expectations so that our young men expect to succeed because the structures around them at home, in schools, and in their

neighborhoods demand and support their excellence.

This report is important given recent events across the country involving Black and Brown males and law enforcement. The deaths of a number of unarmed young men such as Trayvon Martin, Michael Brown, Ezell Ford, Laquan McDonald, Tamir Rice, Keith Scott, Alton Sterling, Philando Castile, and a number of others have raised an important need to help humanize young Black men and other men of color in the eyes of the wider society. By humanizing young Black and Latino males and listening to their hopes, dreams, and aspirations, the goal is to keep these young men alive, honor their youthfulness, and provide the environment to help them thrive and grow.

The report also seeks to stem the troubling tide in the overincarceration of Black and Latino males in this country. While juvenile incarceration has declined over the past decade, the United States still incarcerates over 54,000 youth a year, a disproportionate number of them being young Black and Latino males. Nationally, the U.S. spends \$88,000 per year to incarcerate a young person in a state facility. In 2013, the California Youth Authority reached an astounding high of \$225,000 per year to incarcerate youth (Bernstein, 2014). We also know from data from the Youth First Initiative that youth across all races commit crimes, but Black and Latino youth are more likely than their White peers to be convicted and incarcerated for comparable offenses. This is one of the reasons that Black men are six times as likely, and Latino men are three times as likely, to be incarcerated as White men. These disturbing trends must be disrupted, because over incarceration, along with lack of attention to mental health issues, plays a critical role in the significant numbers of homeless men in cities and counties across the nation.

This report highlights young men who are the products of high expectations. We take time to shine a spotlight on the resilient, intelligent, and caring young men across Los Angeles County. This report takes an unapologetic stance in stating that there are young men who are thriving in their homes, taking on leadership roles in their schools,



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are most grateful to the generous support provided by the Office of Los Angeles County Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas and the California Endowment, Dr. Bob Ross and Charles Field for their courage in investing in young boys and men of color across Los Angeles. It is not always an easy thing to do, but it is the right thing to do. We are also grateful for the ongoing support of Wasserman Dean Marcelo Suarez-Orozco and the Graduate School of Education & Information Studies at UCLA.

and making a difference in their communities. This report is not intended to be full of the doom and gloom about what is wrong with young Black and Latino men. To the contrary, we take the time to center their voices, hear their stories, and listen to their takeaways about how they have accomplished what they are doing and the recommendations that they offer on how to support other Black and Latino young men just like them. We want to thank you for taking the time to read this report. We are grateful to the 200-plus young men who let us into their lives, shared their successes, and provided a different narrative, or what we refer to as “the counter narrative” as opposed to the persistently negative narratives that exist about boys and young men of color in this country. Finally, we are most appreciative of the generous support from the office of Los Angeles County Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas and The California Endowment and Dr. Bob Ross. They have both been tireless in their efforts to support young men of color in the county of Los Angeles and the state of California. This study and report would not have been possible were it not for their support. We hope that you find this report informative, uplifting, refreshing, and inspiring. Moreover, we hope that this report moves readers to want to do something to support young people across Los Angeles County. These young men attribute their successes to people who invest their time, talents, or resources in them. We hope that after reading this report you feel compelled to either continue doing the work that you do on behalf of young people or start today to invest in our future tomorrow.

Sincerely,



Tyrone C. Howard, Ph.D.

Professor

Associate Dean

Graduate School of Education & Information Studies

Director, Black Male Institute

University of California, Los Angeles



GIRLS MATTER TOO!

This report focuses on young Black and Latino boys across Los Angeles County, but we want to be clear that by no means does this report seek to overlook, dismiss, or minimize the challenges that young girls and women of color face. A growing body of literature locally and nationally demonstrates the increasing number of challenges that girls and women of color face in schools and society (Evans-Winters, 2011). An examination of high school graduation rates, suspensions and expulsions, and access to college demonstrates that Black and Latina girls lag considerably behind their white and certain Asian counterparts (Morris, 2016). Thus, interventions are needed to stem the tide for these vulnerable populations. Kimberle Crenshaw in a report titled “Black girls matter: Pushed out, over policed and under protected” states that there is a need to examine the “racialized and gendered contours of the crisis” affecting Black girls and other girls of color. Also, most disturbing is new data from the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), that women are now the fastest growing group of incarcerated individuals in the US. In 2010, more than 200,000 women were behind bars, most of them women of color. Latina women are incarcerated nearly twice the rate of white women, and Black women are locked up at four times the rate of White women (Guerino, et. al, 2011). The social, emotional, family, and economic affects of these realities cannot be overlooked, and while this report focuses on young men, we make a loud call for similar interventions, studies, and reports which addresses solutions of support for the most vulnerable women in our society. This report offers the following references and reports for suggested reading on this topic.

RECOMMENDED READINGS ON GIRLS AND WOMEN OF COLOR

- Crenshaw, K., Ocen, P., & Nanda, J. (2015). *Black Girls Matter: Pushed Out, Overpoliced, and Underprotected*.
- Collins, P. (2000). *Black feminist thought : knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment* (2nd ed.). New York: Routledge.
- Evans-Winters, V. E. (2011). *Teaching Black girls: Resiliency in urban classrooms*. New York: Peter Lang.
- hooks, b. (1984). *Feminist theory from margin to center*. Boston, MA: South End Press.
- Lorde, A. (1984). *Sister outsider: Essays and speeches*. Berkeley, CA: Crossing Press.
- Morris, M. W. (2016). *Pushout: The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools*. The New Press.
- Winn, M. T. (2011). *Girl Time: Literacy, Justice, and the School-to-Prison Pipeline. Teaching for Social Justice*. Teachers College Press. 1234 Amsterdam Avenue, New York, NY 10027.

INTRODUCTION



While there are a number of troubling issues affecting Black and Latino males, there remains a pressing need to tell a more complete story.

Many scholars, practitioners, and policymakers have documented the troubled and often difficult plight of young African American and Latino males (Carrillo, 2016; Conchas & Vigil, 2012; Harper et al., 2014; Howard, 2014; Huerta, 2015; Milner, 2007; Fergus, Noguera & Martin, 2014; Rios, 2011; Saenz & Ponjuan, 2016). Countless accounts of these young men have been framed around a plea for help, their endangered status, their lack of social, academic, and economic success or their over incarceration. Needless to say, there are a myriad challenges that African American and Latino male youth face in their efforts to be self-supporting and life-sustaining. However, the repeated development of a narrative around their lack of success, their underachievement, and their disenfranchisement only reifies in the minds of many that these young men are in a state of constant turmoil and distress.

The educational challenges faced by Black and Latino males have been explored exhaustively, well documented, and yet stubbornly chronic. On virtually every indicator of academic achievement, economic attainment, political participation, and social adjustment, young Black and Latino males are noticeably distinguished from other segments of the U.S. population (Saenz & Ponjuan, 2009; Schott Foundation for Public Education, 2012). Within the context of education, dismal patterns exist in urban, suburban, and rural school districts throughout the nation. They exist in public, public charter, private and parochial schools as well. Nationally, Black and Latino males are most likely to lag in reading and math achievement at early ages and are more likely than any other group to be suspended and expelled from school (Fergus & Noguera, 2011). In many large, urban areas dropout rates for Black and Latino males hover at or near 50%, and as a result they are less likely to enroll in, or graduate from, college than their White and Asian peers (Schott Foundation for Public Education, 2012).

While there are a number of troubling issues affecting Black and Latino males, there remains a pressing need to tell a more complete story. This complete story is centered on the idea that not all Black and Latino males are struggling academically,

most are not involved in the judicial system, and large numbers of them are thriving. It is crucial to provide a counter narrative to the often-told story about these young men being in constant crisis. Hence, the goal of this project was to highlight the success of Black and Latino males across Los Angeles county. The objective was to offer an account that is rarely seen and seldom conveyed: where these young men are succeeding. The development of this counter narrative is important on several levels: 1) it shines light on a population that is rarely seen or heard—high-achieving, community-contributing, successful, well-adjusted Black and Latino young men; 2) it helps identify people, programs, and practices that these young men believe have made a notable impact on their lives; and 3) it offers cases of success that we should seek to replicate at the city, county, state, and national level in order to create more supportive and nurturing environments for these young men. We used Harper's (2014) anti-deficit achievement framework for studying the lives of these young men. In 2013, Harper and associates (2014) embarked on a one of a kind study, by examining the lives of 400 high-achieving Black and Latino males in New York City, and were able to uncover a number of supportive factors in their schools and communities. One of the charges that Harper and his associates made was a need for other large cities to replicate this type of work to help develop a national counter narrative around the lives of Black and Latino males. We heed Harper's call by making Los Angeles the next city that identifies and examines its successful Black and Latino males.

THE LOS ANGELES CONTEXT

Los Angeles County is the most populated county in the United States; it is home to over 10 million residents covering 4,083 square miles. The city's racial, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic makeup is among the most diverse in the world. It is against this backdrop that this study takes place: a county that is expansive, diverse, ever changing, thriving for some, yet incredibly difficult to navigate for others. The young men highlighted in this study are part of the two largest subgroups of students in Los Angeles County schools:

Black and Latino youth. Moreover, they represent the two groups who are woefully overrepresented in the County's juvenile detention centers. Among the data on Black and Latino males are the following:

- Black and Latino males represent two of the largest subgroups in the county of Los Angeles. There are approximately 2.3 million youth in the county, and Black and Latino males make up somewhat more than 800,000 of these youth. Latino males make up close to 727,000 youth in the county and Black males make up slightly more than 83,000 (Kids Count, 2015). While these two groups make up close to 35% of K-12 students across the county, the data on these two groups has not always been the most promising.
- Blacks and Latinos make up the two largest groups in foster care in Los Angeles County. Black and Latino males are the two subgroups most likely to remain in foster care and least likely to be adopted (Kidsdata.org, 2015).
- One in three Black and Latino males live in poverty, representing two of the highest rates of any youth group, three times more than their Asian and White counterparts.
- Black and Latino boys are more likely to be suspended or expelled from school than their White and Asian peers, missing valuable learning time in the classroom.
- Black and Latino males constitute almost 80 percent of youth in special education programs. Black boys are 2.5 times *less likely* to be enrolled in gifted and talented programs, even if their prior achievement reflects the ability to succeed.
- Black (36%) and Latino (37%) males have the lowest third-grade reading proficiency rates of any students across the county. Third-grade reading proficiency is often an important predictor of future academic success.
- Black and Latino males have the lowest graduation rates of any other subgroups in the county.
- Black and Latino males are two of the groups least likely to be ready for college-level math classes.
- Black and Latino males are the two groups least likely to be referred to or placed in gifted education, Honors, or Advanced Placement (AP) courses.

Finding solutions to disrupt these troubling trends involved an examination of three domains: 1) explanations from the young men identifying *home factors* that have contributed to their academic success; 2) explanations of *school practices and*

people that contribute to their success; and 3) identification of *community based programs* or organizations that have been vital to their success. The working hypothesis of this project is that the success of Black and Latino males is due to support from multiple sources, typically involving home, school, and community working in concert to support young men academically, socially, emotionally, and culturally.

COMMUNITY CULTURAL WEALTH: CHALLENGING THE DEFICIT NARRATIVE

Many educational scholars have challenged deficit-based narratives of people of color to rethink how we best understand the lives of culturally and racially diverse youth. One of the works that was most influential in this study has been the research of educational scholar Tara Yosso. Debunking culture and cultural capital as being monolithic and more consistent with the values, traditions, and customs of middle-class, mainstream individuals and actors, Yosso (2005) contends that for many people of color, culture and capital manifests itself in unique, robust, and dynamic ways that are often not captured in mainstream depictions. Yosso's Community Cultural Wealth model includes six types of cultural capital that she recommends educators consider in framing their interactions with students and enhancing their opportunities to learn. She contends that this framework disrupts the anti-deficit-based depictions of people of color who are often viewed by many in the mainstream as either lacking cultural capital, or having the wrong type of cultural capital to succeed in schools and society. She argues that culturally and racially diverse people have cultural capital that is on par with other forms of culture, but just is not recognized or respected in learning settings.

The six forms of cultural capital that Yosso identifies—*aspirational, linguistic, familial, social, navigational, and resistance*—are used as a framing for how we think about success for this study. These approaches to culture are important because Yosso informs us that the ways of knowing, ways of thinking, communicating, and expressing vary for diverse populations. Consequently, efforts to fit all students into narrowly defined constructs of culture will always leave some individuals in the margins and viewed as either not having culture or having a deviant or pathological culture. The authors believe the same can be said for Black and Latino males where issues of success are concerned. We believe that young



I am a second year student at UCLA now. Resources such as Upward Bound, AP classes, TRiO programs, and even one-on-one counselor attention. I also took it upon myself to look for the help I needed, and tried to get as involved as possible!

This report includes rich data that portrays insightful, caring, and empathetic accounts of young men who are successful by many accounts, some captured, and some not, by traditional school accounts.



men in schools across the country employ successful approaches to their school, home, and community work yet they are grossly overlooked, misunderstood, or not recognized. In this study, we hear more about their successes in their words. They document how they define success, what it looks like in their worlds, and by whom and how it is supported.

REDEFINING SUCCESS

As Yosso challenges traditional definitions of cultural capital, in this work we seek to do the same with how we conceptualize “success.” One of the concerns in the professional literature in education has been that success has frequently been defined in narrow terms such as grade point average, test scores, and performance in schools (e.g., quiet, compliant, and non-threatening behavior). While such areas are important to the education context, we feel that they do not capture the full spectrum of the educational and social experiences of many students, and as a result, many Black and Latino males are frequently left outside of the narrow confines of success, despite behaving in ways that are laudable outside their classrooms.

One of the anchoring questions for this study and report was to better understand how Black and Latino males define success. Furthermore, it is important to understand who are instrumental in assisting these students garner their success. In their responses we discovered young men who assisted their peers, demonstrated leadership, and thrived in a multitude of extracurricular activities, as well as putting forth consistent efforts to be the best that they could be, both academically and socially within their respective schools. However, they did not limit their definitions of success to the context of schools. Many of the young men discussed their willingness to support their mothers and grandmothers, assist with younger siblings, or help elderly citizens in their neighborhoods. These humanizing aspects of young Black and Latino males are desperately needed in order to capture the full aspects of their humanity and identity that are often missing from mainstream portrayals of them. Furthermore this report seeks to challenge conventional depictions of Black and Latino males that frequently portray them as menaces to society, violent, pathological, and criminal minded. This report includes rich data that portrays insightful, caring, loving, and empathetic accounts of young men who are successful by many measures, some captured and some not by traditional school criteria. So here, success is redefined

and reimagined in a manner that examines success in multiple contexts: the *school*, *home*, and *community*.

SEQUENCE OF REPORT

This report will be broken down into four parts. In the first section we will highlight the research methods used to collect data for this study, as well as introducing the school sites the young men were selected from. In the second section the young men’s definitions of success are outlined. We will provide excerpts from the students’ voices to capture how they viewed success. In the third section of the report we will highlight the findings from the participants. Here you will read comments and direct quotes from the young men as they discussed success in their homes, schools, and communities. The final section of the report will offer recommendations for school practitioners and leaders, elected officials, and concerned community members about how to replicate success for more young men of color. This section will offer tangible approaches based on the data provided by the young men from this study.

DATA COLLECTION

The primary data collection modes for this project included in-depth interviews. Before conducting any data collection, the principal investigator secured human subjects’ clearance from UCLA’s Institutional Review Board committee. All students’ names used in this report are pseudonyms.

Interview Protocol and Participants

The protocol for interviewing participants focused on capturing their understanding of success and the attributions that they give to their life circumstances. The research team conducted in-depth interviews and focus groups with a sample of 235 Black and Latino males between the ages of 14–18 across seven high schools. It is important to note that prior to data collection, the research team brainstormed assets based indicators of Black and Latino success. The following three characteristics were identified and used to select a “successful student”: 1) grade point average above 2.5, and also non-traditional factors, such as 2) talent or leadership, or 3) resilience, that assisted their success. Selecting participants for the study was based on each of the young men meeting the following criteria:

- Students identified as Black, Latino, or both, and male
- Students had sophomore, junior, or senior status in their high school at the time of the study

PARTICIPATING SCHOOL SITES

	Long Beach Poly	King Drew Medical Magnet	George Washington Preparatory	Social Justice Humanitas	Pasadena Blair	Westchester Enriched Sciences Magnet	
Latino	21	22	19	42	9		
Black	13	20	12	0	3	19	
Mixed Race	14	1	1	1	0	4	
Totals:	48	43	32	43	12	23	201

■ Were recommended by teacher or administrator as student demonstrating one of three characteristics

- ◆ Grade point average of 2.5 or higher
- ◆ Talent or leadership
- ◆ Resilience

■ Had a willingness to participate in interviews

■ Attended a school in Los Angeles County

Analysis

Each interview was audio recorded and subsequently transcribed—this project produced hundreds of single-spaced pages of verbatim interview transcripts. Transcripts were uploaded to a qualitative data analysis software program, Dedoose, which is a cross-platform application used for analyzing qualitative and mixed methods research.

Excerpts are independently defined objects in Dedoose, meaning that selections of data were marked and listed separately and need not be coded in order to identify them as meaningful. Additionally, excerpts were reviewed centrally and listed in different ways (e.g., according to code application, descriptor field, etc.). Data also were viewed independently, lifted out of source context, or located within source context, as team members manually performed line-by-line readings of the text and identified prevalent themes and reoccurring topics, ultimately attaching key words, terms, and phrases that represented recurring patterns in the data. Before the coding process began, standardized statistical methods within the software were used to measure and strengthen inter-rater reliability.

THE RESEARCH TEAM

The research process began with the construction of an 7-member research team that included Dr. Tyrone Howard from UCLA; Dr. LaMont Terry from Occidental College; five doctoral students from the UCLA Graduate School of Education & Information Studies, Brian Woodward, Oscar Navarro (who recently earned his

Ph.D. and is now on faculty at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo), Kenjus T. Watson, Bianca N. Haro, and Adrian H. Huerta; and the assistance of four UCLA undergraduate students. The team began meeting regularly during the 2014–2015 academic year to discuss and develop the overarching design of the study, research questions, the theoretical framing of the study, and design research instruments. The team also discussed how our own educational experiences as young men and women of color influenced how we thought about school, how we defined success, the crucial people in our lives, and how those circumstances shaped us all. These early conversations were instrumental in thinking about a design that did not rely solely on traditional measures of success and “good” behavior. These dialogues were often quite informative as they demonstrated the diverse paths that we each experienced on our journey to educational “success.” Moreover, these dialogues also left us all pondering the fates of peers of ours who demonstrated similar or superior intellect, yet who were not offered the same opportunities as we were. Needless to say, the wasted potential was not lost on us as we engaged in this work. This report would not be possible without the countless hours invested by the research team.

SCHOOL SITES

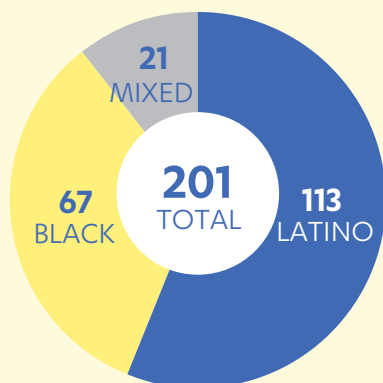
The schools that were selected for this study were chosen based on several criteria. Schools were selected based on having a significant African American and Latino population. Finding schools with a significant African American student body proved to be difficult, due to their declining presence in schools across Los Angeles County. We were also seeking to identify public schools that were open to us talking to students about their school context. Finally, we were looking for schools where we had existing relationships in working with staff, students, and families regarding student support. We are most grateful to the participating school sites. Read school profiles and demographics on page 28.



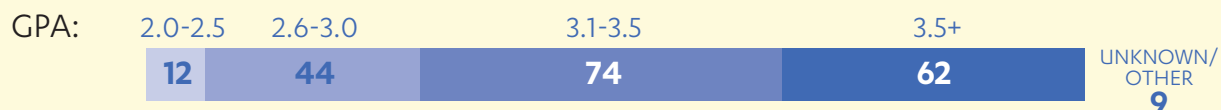
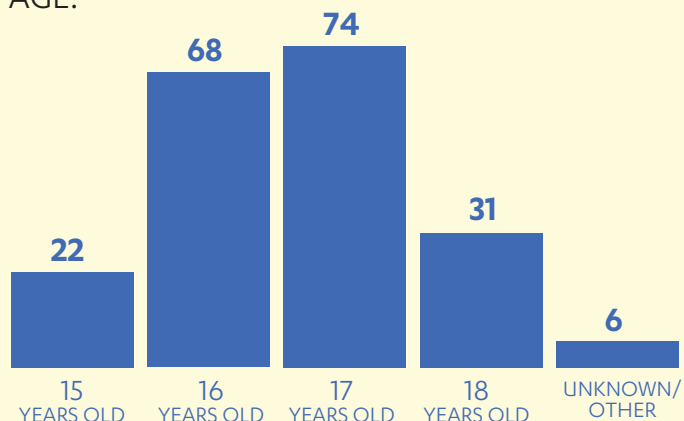
My success is directly tied to dedicated teachers... they continuously encouraged me to go to college... Programs like Vice Provost Initiative for PreCollege Scholars (VIPS) showed me how college classes were going to be like and they offered me scholarships.

PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

ENTHNICITY:

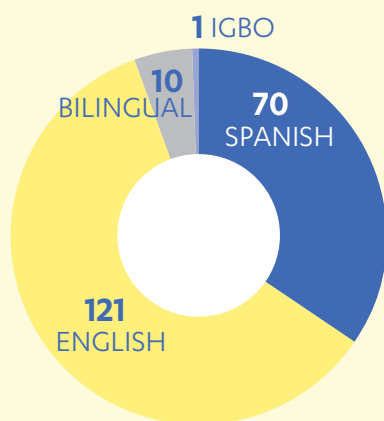


AGE:

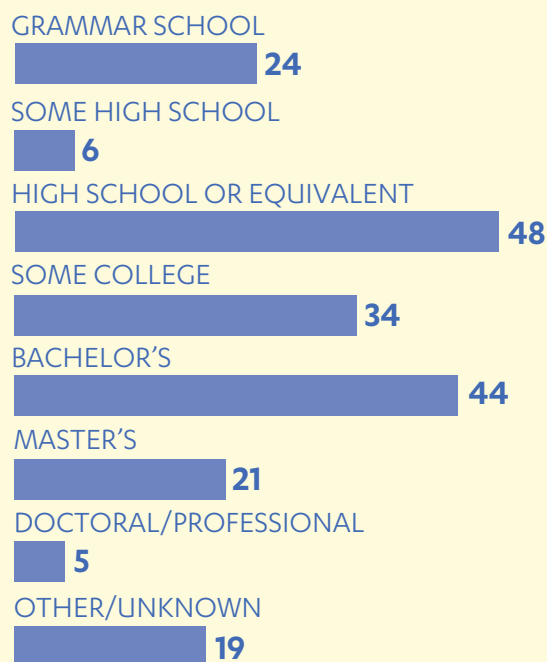


AVERAGE GPA FOR ALL PARTICIPANTS: **3.36**

PRIMARY LANGUAGE
SPOKEN AT HOME:



PARENT'S HIGHEST LEVEL
OF EDUCATION



AP/HONORS
COURSES COMPLETED





These humanizing aspects of young Black and Latino males are desperately needed in order to capture the full aspects of their humanity and identity that are often missing from mainstream portrayals of them.

When asked to describe themselves, the majority of participants provided one-word responses rather than extended answers, making the use of a table appropriate. The table reveals that the participants overwhelmingly offered more positive than negative self-descriptive adjectives. The adjective most frequently given by the participants to describe themselves was “hardworking.” Other words that were provided often included “determined,” “outgoing,” “motivated,” “funny,” and “being a leader.” Alternatively there were four words provided by the participants that can be stereotypically categorized as negative: “lazy,” “timid,” “cocky,” and “taking short cuts.” When asked to “describe yourself,” the participants offered a variety of adjectives. Again, however, the majority of participants saw themselves as hard workers, evidenced by the following quotes:

Probably hard working. I never give up. If I start something then I got to finish it

I’m a hard worker. I strive to be the best at something

Hard working, diligent and dedicated

Hard working like dedicated to what I want to do

The participants noted that their success was contingent on their own individual merit. Moreover, in their opinion it is their work ethic that separates themselves from their peers.

An additional adjective that the Black and Latino males used regularly to describe themselves was “determined.” Anthony stated:

I see myself as determined because even through adversity at home, my community, and school I feel that I can get it done if I want to and I have that drive. Other than determined I feel I’m optimistic because a lot of people see the negative here (at Washington HS) and I don’t really look at the negative I see the positive and in what I can do and what I will do and what I have done.

In the quote Anthony expressed how being determined was critical to his success. There is an acknowledgement that despite difficulties these young men may encounter in various spaces, having determination helps to combat hardships. Furthermore the participants also explained that despite negative perceptions placed on them and

their respective communities and schools, their solution was to have a positive outlook.

A number of the participants described themselves as team players and having an ability to forge productive relationships, which was believed to be salient when garnering success. Jalil commented:

I build pretty good relationships with my friends. We talk, we have fun but either way we still get our work done. Even if we talk, we get our work done by the end of class or we get whatever they assign us done before the due date. So I feel like we balance out fun with work too.

The quote demonstrated that developing relationships with peers could prove advantageous both academically and socially.

The adjectives put forth by the Black and Latino males not only demonstrate the diversity of thinking amongst these young men, but affirm how self aware they are, while challenging stereotypes of who and what these students represent.

The first step toward redefining success related to Black and Latino males is to offer opportunities for these young men to discuss who they are. Adjectives such as **hardworking, determined, and having the ability to work with others** were just a few descriptors offered by the participants. These young men expressed an inherent belief in their ability to achieve success in their schools, homes, and communities through persistent effort. Moreover the participants saw themselves as instrumental figures willing to lend a hand to loved ones in times of need, while seeking similar support and guidance in their own endeavors. Thus, by simply describing to the research team who they were, these young men were challenging deficit notions of Black and Latino youth while concurrently validating their worth.

STUDENTS’ DEFINITIONS OF SUCCESS

Success is a term that has multiple definitions and interpretations. The term is typically associated with the accomplishment of an aim or purpose, or connected to favorable termination of attempts or endeavors; in short, the accomplishment of one’s goals. Developing an understanding of how Black and Latino male high school students define success is one of the primary objectives of this study. It is important to understand these young men’s drive and motivation to succeed in a society where their

success is often not expected or not viewed in abundance. Given that this study focused on young men who were doing well in their schools, homes, and communities, they were deemed either successful or high-achieving individuals by school personnel. To identify the young men in this report we went to schools and asked teachers, administrators, and staff to nominate young men who they believed fit one of these two terms. Many of the young men were surprised that someone thought of them as successful. Some were confused as to how they were viewed in such a light, while others believed that they were most deserving of such labels. Identifying the definitions and descriptions offered by these young men about success is critical for several reasons.

The self-described definitions are not necessarily ones imposed on them from adults but are more organically derived; second, success is not only limited to what students do in the classroom. By broadening the scope to other places that students occupy with high frequency we can highlight the ways in which these young men are making a difference

in their homes and communities. Finally, these self-described notions of success allow the voices of students to be centered, empowered, and validated as perspectives and opinions that matter. Far too often, young people's voices are muted, overlooked, or disregarded in discourses about them, their hopes, dreams, and aspirations. To disrupt these actions and anchoring what students think matters most in their schools, homes, and communities we can develop more meaningful interventions. Only when we are able to look past their singular constructs of what it means to be successful can we lift the prospects of those on the margins and celebrate the influence on our society writ large. The following section highlights the students' definitions of success. The diversity in reactions to being nominated for this study led us to ask the young men how they defined success. It was clear from their responses that many of the young men have internalized various signals, signs, and definitions from the wider society, media, peers, families, and teachers about what signifies "success."

If the teacher gets on the student's level, they humanize themselves... I think that that's a lot better than just yelling at a kid...





They [my parents] always tell me that they came from Mexico to give me and my siblings a better life... that's always been a pushing factor for me to succeed.

The Importance of School: Personnel and Organizations

Throughout the interviews, the young men talked about how school personnel and organizations were crucial to their success. Teachers' care, guidance, and role modeling were critical characteristics that the young men offered about certain school staff that contributed to their success. In addition, organizations housed within the school played a supporting role, specifically extracurricular organizations, university and community organizations, and team sports. These organizations encouraged academic success, opportunities for leadership, and social and emotional support. This section will explain how the people and organizations within schools contribute to student success.

PEOPLE: SCHOOL PERSONNEL AND STUDENTS

School personnel served as a supportive source in aiding the success of Black and Latino male participants at their respective schools. Administrators, counselors, coaches, core teachers, non-core teachers, and staff employed a variety of strategies to assist in the success of students. For a number of students, rigorous, relevant, and responsive teaching, caring relationships, guidance and role modeling from school personnel contributed to student success in schools. Additionally, having faculty that were of the same racial/ethnic, cultural background was salient to the young men. Students found it encouraging that a number of faculty and staff members came from similar neighborhoods and were making a positive contribution to their community. Ultimately, having people that were genuinely concerned with students' overall well-being was critical to their success in schools.

Rigorous, relevant, and responsive teaching.

Students explained that rigorous, relevant, and responsive teaching positively impacted their success in school. This type of teaching kept students engaged and enhanced learning, while also providing positive teacher-student relationships. To begin, students often said that they thrived in rigorous classrooms that made learning interesting and meaningful. For example, Lalo stated:

Mr. Allende's class is more active than other teachers. He gets everyone to talk and everyone

gives their opinion, everyone thinks harder than they do in other classes, and we all do a lot of writing, discussions, and lectures. But the way he teaches is really interesting.

The participants in the study explained that student engagement went beyond making the class entertaining but involved students engaging in rigorous course material. Rigorous, relevant, and responsive teaching required thoughtful unit and lesson plans to make learning meaningful. In addition, the participants also explained the importance of teachers making learning relevant. Below a student explains how his physics teacher made this possible. Nicholas offered the following:

He (teacher) would relate it to real life situations ... we built a lighthouse where we actually had to circuit and wire all the lighting ourselves, which was really cool. It was difficult but it was cool. I liked that. And we also built some headphones as well ... We actually built a heat engine ... you build the engine and then you put it in a boat and it actually starts moving ... I like hands-on teaching.

In this example, the teacher provided multiple opportunities to connect physics to "real life situations." Nicholas was able to see his learning cross over into reality through a hands-on approach. Other students provided similar examples, such as historical re-enactments, science labs, and lessons that connected to their lived reality. Outside of engagement and content learning, responsive teacher-student interactions were often mentioned. The excerpt below describes a responsive approach to supporting struggling students. Hakeem explains:

If the teacher gets on the student's level, they humanize themselves. They get on your level and they tell you, "Yeah, I've been in your position, we can do this. I'm going to help you get from here to here. I've been through what you've been through." I think that that's a lot better than just yelling at a kid for not doing their homework. Just understanding their perspective.

Hakeem explains that getting “on the student’s level” is a positive approach to assist a student succeed in the classroom. Students often mentioned that they benefitted from teachers with similar cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. Culturally relevant interactions often provide the nudge students need to overcome an obstacle in a given classroom. Given the racial and ethnic demographics in today’s schools, having teachers of color may not always be possible. However, a number of the students highlighted the need for teachers to be humanistic and culturally sensitive in their interactions with students. The following sections will further describe how school personnel demonstrate care, guidance, and role modeling for students in and out of the classroom.

School personnel providing care, mentorship, and role modeling. One emerging theme within the interviews was the critical role that school personnel played in helping the participants achieve both personal and academic success. Three primary ways that school personnel aided the participants within the schooling environment were demonstrating care, guidance, and being a role model for these young men. The school staff not only enhanced the participants’ individual success, but also made education more meaningful for them in the process. Below are examples that the young men offered regarding how staff members were caring, provided guidance, and served as role models for the Black and Latino males, resulting in their success within schools.

Mr. Johansen...you know seeing a black dude up there teaching who looks like you, and is pushing you to be better, it makes a difference. We need more teachers like him.—Devonte

Care. Having knowledge that school personnel not only care but are willing to demonstrate that care were significant factors associated with the participants’ success in schools. Jose commented on how his school counselor Mrs. Johnson demonstrated care for him by stating:

My counselor she really helps ... with college and stuff and then even with your classes. If you need help, just ask for advice like, “which class should I take, which ones are colleges looking for” ... she’s just really welcoming, like kind, and very relatable and you can talk to them about life and about different things.

Similarly, Arturo explains how his teachers make time to support his success.



Some teachers offer assistance for students after school, during lunch, schedule study sessions, they seem to care about our success in the classroom. They’re the first people to make sure we are all right.

While it may seem by the quotes provided that these educators were just doing their job, Jose and Arturo’s counselor and teacher respectively went above and beyond what was required of them. It was important to these educators that they meet their students’ overall needs, both from an academic and socio-emotional standpoint.

Another example of how the participants’ teachers demonstrated that they cared about the young men was their insistence on setting high expectations. For example Mark had a teacher who persuaded him to enroll in a more rigorous course despite his reluctance. Mark maintained:

My teachers have had a pretty big positive impact in the sense that they sort of nudged me a little into trying a harder class. I remember my sophomore year, my Biology teacher was talking with me and she was like, “You should consider taking Honors Chemistry” and I wasn’t sure about it at the time but after thinking about it and talking about it, I was like “Well this teacher feels like I can do it. So if she thinks I can do it why shouldn’t I think that I can do it?” Afterwards I was like “Well maybe I can do it so let’s sign up for it and see what happens.” Then I ended up taking Honors Chem next year and passing with an A.

Success is not only limited to what students do in the classroom. By broadening the scope to other places that students occupy with high frequency we can highlight the ways in which these young men are making a difference in their homes and communities.

Rigorous, relevant, and responsive teaching, caring relationships, guidance and role modeling from school personnel contributed to student success in schools.

Mark's comment illustrated that the teacher had more confidence in his own abilities than he had in himself. The teacher convinced him to take a more challenging course, resulting in Mark receiving an A in the course. Encouraging students to exceed their own expectations exemplified how teachers demonstrated care for the participants, while setting a standard of excellence for the males to follow in school.

To ensure student success, a number of teachers developed initiatives designed to support the academic and social needs of students in general and Black and Latino males in particular. Xavier stated:

Mr. McKeller, he's started YBMG, Young Black Male Group, we bring awareness stuff like that. We dress up on Mondays and yeah, it gave a positive outlook.

Showing interest in the "whole" person, being available and flexible with your time, establishing high expectations, and developing initiatives for the participants were just a few of the ways school personnel signified that they cared about the male participants and wanted them to have success in school. In addition to demonstrating care, providing mentorship for the young men was also a salient factor in their success.

Mentorship. For a number of the participants, school personnel provided the type of mentorship that increased the likelihood of the students having success in schools. The participants noted that

having staff members who were personable with students served as an important part of mentoring. Along these lines, Joseph remarked:

Mrs. Washington (biology teacher) talked about her own personal experiences going to UCLA, how she studied at school, didn't go out on the weekends because she put school as a priority and that kind of changed the way I viewed things.

The willingness of Joseph's teacher to discuss her collegiate experiences not only allowed insight into how she was able to successfully navigate school, but it also created an opportunity for her students to have a better understanding of who she was. In addition to being personal, being available was expressed by students as an important factor contributing toward their success. John revealed this about his teacher:

He's (Mr. Wilkerson—history teacher) basically always been around. Say like a real life mentor, someone that followed me, and make sure I was on track.

The quote above reveals that for this student, Mr. Wilkerson extended his role beyond the classroom by becoming a mentor and someone that the young men could place their trust in. As a result of the teacher demonstrating his investment in his student's overall well-being, this student was assured of the teacher's commitment to his success in school. The role of mentor was extended even further as staff members were seen as father figures to some of the students. Carl, a high school junior, asserted:

He (Coach Wilson) kinda acts like our dad, everyone on the team, he's our football dad so he cares about football but that is not the only focus, his main focus is like getting us ready for the real world.

The quote highlighted that the football coach at this particular school served as a father figure for this student and many others. Carl remarks that while leading young men on the football field was important, his coach's primary concern was his ability to prepare the young men for the world off the field. In expressing this sentiment to his players, the coach had the dual role of athletic leader and father figure. The ability to have personal relationships, making oneself available, and serving as a parental figure helped school personnel and students forge a bond that allowed for the mentorship necessary to be successful in school.



SECTION III

Home as a Source of Support

The Black and Latino males in our study repeatedly referred to their homes as safe havens where love, care, and encouragement are ever-present. The chorus of the young men's narratives speaks to permanence of adult support, important immigration experiences, the pendulum of challenges and triumphs at home, and the value of family and education. The young men in the study also characterize their homes as spaces of empowerment that consistently contributed to their aspirations to succeed. This section highlights how the dynamics of the "home" have guided the young men and served as a place of affirmation to continue despite the barriers they encounter.

RESILIENCY IN THE HOME

For the young men in this study, resiliency was displayed on a daily basis. A majority of the young men lived in single-parent households or in homes where both parents worked extensive hours. So many of them addressed the manner in which they had to manifest resiliency to deal with various challenges:

I don't really see my dad because he's been absent all my life... I'm really more close to my uncle and my grandparents... they've been there all my life... Don't get me wrong, I look up to him as well, but it's not the same bond that I feel with my grandparents and my uncle, and they help me with a lot of things in life.

While a narrative has emerged where large numbers of children of color grow up in fatherless homes, this data demonstrates that although fathers were not always present in the home, there were other men who played prominent roles; uncles, grandfathers, cousins, and older brothers were mentioned often. This is important to note because much has been made about the tragedies of Black and Latino males who do not have positive male role models in their lives. While some might view the absence of fathers as a deficit, to be clear, many of the participants stressed that there were still important men in their lives. Other participants talked about this reality:

My uncle... he's more like a father, cause I never had the parental support with them [my parents]... I don't want to blame them or anything but it was just probably for their concern over trying to be stable, have a home. So my uncle was the one... [pushing] me towards school more... come to one of my track meets or... take me places if they can't come to like a parent conference, he'd be like the substitute to come.

Salvador added:

My godparents... they are also very supportive... they are always there for me and, when I have trouble with the car, or for example over summer... I wanted to buy my own car... [and] he [godfather] helped me get a car. It's really great cuz... he helps me with everything.

It should be noted that many of the participants expressed their appreciation for the supportive and stable home environments they had. Moreover, the young men frequently talked about the strength and perseverance that was evident in their homes, which fueled their outlooks on life and contributed to their success.

INTRA- AND INTERGENERATIONAL SUCCESS IN THE HOME

The majority of the students tied their success to the achievement of other members in their family. Whether it was educational attainment, maintaining a happy, loving life, keeping consistent employment, or taking care of others, these young men drew inspiration, found the drive to succeed and strength from older siblings, parents, and other family members who served as motivation and models of success. Christian reflects on his older sister and states:

My sister. She's five years older than me and she's been in college. This is actually her last year... She's been the best help I can have... I call her the experiment child because she's seen college and she's gone through high school. She survived and I'm just waiting on her. She tells me every day



My whole family helps me out, my grandma, all my aunties, my dad, my mom, my sister. We all help each other and we all push each other to make sure everybody is successful.



Always be on top of your game so you can help others. That's how I was raised... If you ever see someone struggling, you got to help them.

"get this ready, get this straight, by the time you go to college this is how it's going to be"

For Christian, his older sister's achievement played a crucial role in finding the support and guidance that encourages many first-generation Black and Latino males to succeed in pursuit of college. Although Christian's parents were unable to assist him with schoolwork or college applications, his sister served as a trailblazer, a role model that paved the road and was a source of encouragement for him. Michael shared a similar sentiment about his brothers.

...my brothers, my siblings... every single one of them, is at the college level. My brother is at UCI and my other brother is at Cal State LA... I've always been surrounded by the type of people that want me to go to college to learn new things.

Michael's reference to his siblings' higher education success is not only a source of support and mentoring; it also challenges the narrative that Black and Latino male youth do not have positive role models in their homes and communities or that they do not care about their education. Like many of the participants in this study, Michael has older siblings who are attending or graduating from 4-year universities. This intragenerational success in the home has surrounded Michael with role models, encouragement, and guidance to be a high-achieving young man. More importantly, this finding counteracts deficit notions of young Black and Latino males by reinforcing the success of the young men interviewed and the success that resided in their homes with their brothers, sisters, and parents. Vincent shares this about his brother:

My brother... seeing what he does, where he's at right now, that just motivates me to do better... he's at Harvard... He wants to be in the medicine field. He's my role model.

For Vincent, his brother attending an Ivy League school did not make him feel a sense of pressure; it reinforced the success within his home and the opportunity he had to get support from his brother. While the majority of the young men in this study revealed the educational success in their homes, they also acknowledged the success of their parents and correlated it with their hard work and labor. As Felipe states,

my father... he raised a family of six, he was happy, of course there were struggles but as a

family we pulled through. We all supported each other emotionally.

Although attaining a higher education was a major determinant of achievement in the home, the young men also identified their parents' hard work, dedication to provide, and emotional support as success. This success in the home has motivated the young men to be academically successful and work in community towards the success of everyone in the home.

HELPING AT HOME

Contrary to negative portrayals of Black and Latino males as being void of emotion and compassion, many of the study participants identified serving their families in a supportive and altruistic role as a high priority for them. Some of these young men are responsible for taking care of their siblings while their primary caretakers are at work.

My mom and sister and I have been through some really tough situations. Sometimes our car would break down and we had... me and my sister had to get out and push it and sometimes ... like this one time it happened on a busy street and people were honking and I am like shut up. Yeah, we really work as a good team.

Like other participants in the study, Brandon and his family experienced hardships. However, they were able to work together as a team to confront the difficulties associated with socioeconomic disadvantage. Moreover, Brandon saw his role within his family as a source of support for his sister and mother. This theme of reciprocal and collaborative household relationships emerged from other participant voices as well.

My whole family helps me out, my grandma, all my aunties, my dad, my mom, my sister. We all help each other and we all push each other to make sure everybody is successful and all my cousins and everything. We all help each other, whether it is school or anything we know we got each other's back so that is pretty much all there is.

Other young men considered their achievement across numerous domains as foundational towards building socioeconomic security for themselves and their family. Several young men actually described the term "success" as being able to help and provide for their family members.

If I make it through the highest amount [of education] that I can reach, although it's hard and it's going to be a journey, but making it here out of the place that I live, making out of the society that I live in or changing the society that I'm living and being able to provide for my family...I think success is doing your best to improve all of mankind.

STORIES OF MIGRATION

One of the themes that came up with many of the young men, the Latino participants in particular, were stories of migration. Nearly one of every four Americans is now an immigrant or the child of parents who came from another country. Many of the children in our K-12 schools are challenged daily with formidable tasks of learning English, mastering academic English, learning the culture of their new land, and learning subject matter content—all concurrently.

Many of the Latino young men talked about hearing stories of migration from elders in their families and communities. The migration stories the elders shared with the young men manifested in the home and transferred to a deep sense of pride for them and their families. The stories of their parents', grandparents', and for some, their own migration to the United States, gave the young men a sense of responsibility to succeed, and motivated them to make their parents proud and make the migration journey significant for all. The young men seemed to view the migration of their family members as a sacrifice and honored the fearlessness and courage of their family members to come to a new country with the goal of providing them with an opportunity for a better life. All of this was an inspiration to succeed, graduate high school, and attend college. Alex shared this:

They [my parents] always tell me that they came from Mexico to give me and my siblings a better life so... that's always been a pushing factor for me to succeed... and... trying to get good grades and doing extracurriculars in order to live up to what they expect... They gave up their whole life... so I can't throw it away here.

The story of the migration of Alex's parents has been the driving force for his success. The retelling and deep understanding of the reasons behind his parents' migration has urged and encouraged a number of these young men to be academically successful and not dismiss the opportunity to

achieve, not just for themselves, but for their entire families. Daniel mentioned this:

I was born in Mexico and then I came when I was eight... I struggled... trying to learn the language the first two years. But I kept working hard to figure it out, just like my parents did to bring us to this country.

Although Daniel struggled to learn English, his story of migration conveys the perseverance and determination he has to excel in high school. He found the strength in his home, in his own lived story of migration, to continue despite the language barrier. Now, he is a high-achieving young man who is pursuing higher education. Anthony speaks of his uncle's migration story in this manner:

My uncle... he overcame many obstacles in coming to the United States and I'll say he's a successful Latino male because... he doesn't have... a job that pays well but I think he does a lot to support his family.

While Anthony acknowledges his uncle's laborious and underpaid job, his journey to the United States and the dedication to provide is recognized by Anthony and motivates him to be academically successful. His father's absence is replaced by the support of his uncle and furthers his desire to prevail. Similarly, Emmanuel speaks of his father:

My father, well he started from the bottom... he came from Mexico, he jumped the border [and] married my mom. They were very poor... I feel like I owe it to them... I owe it to myself to work hard because of what they have [had] to sacrifice in order for me to... have clothes... eat, and go to school.

MASCULINITY

Many of the participants we interviewed expressed lived experiences with nondominant forms of masculinity, while simultaneously describing and defying the rigid expectations of what it means to be a man. Hegemonic or dominant masculinity is often characterized by rugged individualism, an uncritical commitment to capitalism and financial success at all cost, sexist and homophobic attitudes and behaviors directed towards women and members of the LGBTQ community, lack of emotional intelligence, and a potentially violent, domineering approach to conflict in relationships and other everyday circumstances. The participants in



Far too often, young people's voices are muted, overlooked, or disregarded in discourses about them, their hopes, dreams, and aspirations.



For me success is about doing something different, doing something big...I didn't want to perpetuate the negative cycle of young African American males

the study seem to be aware of this normative framing of masculinity and mentioned they felt pressure at times to conform to patriarchal standards. However, numerous young men also described success that challenged these narrow definitions of what it meant to be a man, articulating some aspects of what researchers have called "progressive Black and Latino masculinities." For instance, although hegemonic masculinity requires men to be undaunted stewards of traditional forms of success, the participants offered diverse and nuanced perspectives of their identities and achievement. Throughout the study we heard words and statements like "cry" "my emotions" and "my feelings," which are not typically part of the narrow depictions of masculinity. Take the student below who is speaking about his sense of self:

So people think being queer is all bad and stuff, but it doesn't make me any less than a person. I'm still strong, brave, smart, determined and I will be successful. I don't care what anyone says.

This student spoke of his queer identity in proud terms and contended that this does not deter him from his goals, regardless of what outsiders might think and say. Cedric, talked about love and religion as core to his identity:

My pastor is happy where he is. He's doing what God has led him to do. He's putting the kids first. He often says there's three things no one can take away from you, love, God, and a good education. That's my opinion too. Nothing wrong with saying you love God.

Some of the young men were also aware of dominant frames and felt pressure to conform to certain patriarchal expectations. However, their awareness of the existence of hegemonic masculinity was not always translated into explicitly aligned dominant behaviors.

Some guys that I know like they feel that they have to go in the wrong direction and be like maybe be tough or mess with people or be violent. But, for me, I want to go to college. I take school serious. I take my sports serious. And, I just want to be a successful person... doing something productive with life....

This student witnessed and seemed to be aware of the draw towards damaging forms of hypermasculinity. He is clearly uninterested in following the same path as some of his peers. However, the young man has

a nuanced enough perspective that he doesn't rely on the simple, dichotomous and punitive narrative of "good" and "bad" men of color. Like other participants, he humanizes other young men in his life, identifies with them, and acknowledges his own potential engagement with hegemonic masculinity. He seems to be gentle with himself and others even while opting out of problematic masculinity.

The students' awareness of dominant masculine frames was not always translated into expressly aligned dominant behaviors. In fact, even those participants who seemed to be more inclined towards seeking out the traditionally masculine forms of success were more concerned with failing the individuals around them than simply obtaining a dominant socioeconomic position. And several talked about the emotional weight that comes with it:

Despite their awareness of normative masculinity, the majority of our participants expressed emotionally intelligent and progressive forms of masculinity. They were empathetic and cared for others.

I think I am good at putting myself in someone else's shoes. If I did something wrong I will sort of know what I did wrong.

Jamison commented:

I am a paraclete so I basically take care of the children of the church while the parents are in the sanctuary and in the services. We take care of the kids and it's made me a lot more caring. Just over the past two years I have been a lot more caring towards people than I ever was.

SUMMARY

As shown, the homes of the Black and Latino men in this study had a tremendous impact on their desire to be academically successful, not only for themselves but for their family and communities. Their homes conveyed vigor and strength that challenged traditional notions of masculinity and demonstrated a dedication to the growth and happiness of all members. The stories of migration were evidence of the sacrifice and hard work parents endured to give the young men an opportunity for a better life—an opportunity they are committed to. The achievement in the home reinforces the guidance and support the young men in this study possess.

SECTION IV

The Importance of Community

The influence of community for Black and Latino male students carries major significance in their lives. It goes without stating that most communities provide safe and supportive environments to build and sustain bonds with their peers, family members, and local leaders. It is also clear that some communities have challenging environments filled with drugs, gangs, and violence, which these young men remind us may cause fear and withdrawal. This section highlights how community guides and influences how the young men build resiliency, the desire to help and give back, locate and thrive in supportive spaces, and the feeling of safety from external pressures.

SPACES TO FOSTER THE DEVELOPMENT OF RESILIENCY

The Black and Latino male students utilized different spaces in their communities to form their resiliency. Resiliency is central in their development of inner strength to help guide them away from gangs, overcome various struggles, and focus on their social and academic goals. Fostering resiliency is shaped and interpreted differently by each student, but is a vital internal tool for each young man. The young men discussed how they located sources of strength to guide them. One of those sources of support was the church. As Terrance shares:

[Church] strengthens me and I apply that to my life a lot when I go through troubles and hardships

Terrance's church allowed a space to process his personal challenges. In addition to church and faith, athletics was identified as a community source of support for many of the young men. The Black and Latino males participated in different sports in their schools and communities, which allowed them to learn new skills with their peers, as Julio comments below:

If it wasn't for boxing—I wouldn't be the man that I am today because...my community...there was a lot of gangs in middle school. There was a lot of gangs and I was involved with the wrong crowd. But I was always trying to stay away because of

boxing...I don't want to be [like them]...I'm a boxer—I can't be involved in [gangs], I still hanged around [them] because they were my friends, but I wouldn't do what they did.

Julio used a local Boys & Girls Club to develop an interest in boxing. His involvement in boxing helped redirect his focus from gangs and negative peer influences in the community to focusing on his physical and mental health instead. There is a tension because the gang members are his childhood friends, whereas other students are aware of gangs and violence in their community and use their resiliency to avoid the constant temptation to join a gang or crew.

I live next to a park...it's ghetto and gang affiliated place...I've been raised up there and I've seen nothing but family events, that's where I grew up and saw a great place...it's a family.

Although the local park is located in a gang neighborhood, Julio is able to look past the negativity and see the families using the park and see the "great place" that it can be.

I started swimming at the pool...and that gave me a lot of opportunities...it opened up a lot of opportunities, it made me a better person...a better person in the sense of physically and mentally

Mark used the community to build his resiliency to become a "better person." Similar to the other young men in this section who used their church and sports to develop a stronger inner determination to navigate their communities.

HELPING OTHERS AND GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY

The students stated that their surrounding communities are an important part of their identity as people of color and contribute to their aspirations to help others. They consistently stated that they care and are invested in their communities, and hold a sense of personal pride and investment by contributing through various formal and informal service opportunities



The students' internal satisfaction with helping others within their communities plays a significant part in their lives.

(e.g., community sports, fund-raising, and Habitat for Humanity). With each activity and formal investment into their community, the students showed additional types of pride and concern for the betterment of their communities. Victor stated:

I am part of the Top Teens Program...we help do Red Cross 4K runs...breast cancer [fundraising]... it helps me learn how to motivate people and how to care for people more...how to make people feel better even though they are having all of these hardships...I definitely think it's had a positive effect on me.

Giving back to the community is an important step for these young men to build their views of success but cement their commitment to helping others.

Feels Internal Responsibility to Help Others

Arturo discusses the loneliness and isolation he experienced in middle school, which inspires him to want to help others, so they do not have similar moments. Arturo said he views helping others as a moral responsibility.

I'm a very helpful person. I really like helping other people because I know how it felt in middle school, I wasn't really successful and I needed help and nobody helped me—so I know that pain of being alone and not knowing who to go

to for help. I always felt that as a person it was my responsibility to help others and that's a motivating factor into my success. Always be on top of your game so you can help others. That's how I was raised in my house. If you ever see someone struggling, you got to help them.

Community Beautification Involvement

The community beautification process helped Ricardo witness how his efforts can have a direct impact on his connection to the community. The experience allows the students to feel successful by helping others.

I volunteered for the neighborhood pride day... it helps you make the community look beautiful, so...our job was to clean the houses, clean fences...being part of that for one day...helped me open my eyes more—it helped me see that I have the power to affect my community and it just helped me connect to others...helped me become successful

The students see the power of their efforts not only transforming the physical characteristics of their community, but also identifying that they play an active role in being responsible for the long-term value of their community and developing networks with others who share similar values in investing in their neighborhoods. The students' internal satisfaction with helping others within their communities plays a significant part in their lives. This investment in the communities helps open students' "eyes" to how they can individually serve others and feel a sense of satisfaction.

In the following example, the student worked with his father teaching sports to adolescents. Brandon thinks about his service as "helping society." These efforts may have lasting effects not only on the participants but also on the young people they serve in their communities.

I started volunteering with my dad...coaching basketball and football at the parks...I like that...I like to see these kids compete...I like to push them to do their best...it makes me feel good... helping society and just knowing I'm doing something to help society.

Brandon shares his enthusiasm for sports with the kids and his father in the parks during different team sports. Both students see their involvement





in the community as efforts to improve their local community, as well as the larger society.

As students in this study continue investing in their communities, they will build their sense of civic engagement. Although the previous examples primarily highlight students' individual efforts, the influence of their parents also contributes to their investment in local, but also global, communities in need. As Zack shares:

My mom...she's a nurse...she works with a program that goes to Africa...they provide medical treatment, dental treatment, provide them with school supplies, so what I do is help pack all the supplies and help organize. This just really shows me...after seeing all their pictures [when] they come back...really showed me that nothing should be taken for granted cause they're really living off like the smallest amount of supplies. After college, I want to give back to countries like that...even around the community—just give back

Zack aspires to helping other communities and countries in need. The photos from his mother's volunteer trip are testament to his direct impact on the lives of people around the globe. These students demonstrate a keen awareness of their impact on the community and also how their involvement helps them grow and become better people.

COMMUNITY SUPPORTIVE SPACES

Black and Latino male students stated the physical spaces (e.g. parks, community centers, churches,

etc.) in their community are needed to cultivate and sustain their social networks. These networks are important due to the peers who are instrumental in their development. Having these “spaces” is crucial to foster mentoring and peer relationships with others who are invested in Black and Latino males' personal well-being. The young men talked about several locations in their communities that were helpful for them throughout Los Angeles County:

The park...I just walk around...and look outside my view and breathe, it helps me relieve my stress as well as ponder in my mind...I get a lot of ideas...it helps my mind breathe and I can think clearly about my homework and what I can do for my work

Frank, quoted above, sees the park as a place to de-stress and collect his thoughts. This calm environment allows him to conceptualize his homework assignments. Other males are involved in structured programs to build relationships with other teenagers and mentors. Ronnie shares his satisfaction at being a part of the Youth Policy Institute.

Youth Policy Institute...is a place where you get to talk to people...other high school students, we're all going to be seniors...they're saying some of the same things that I'm feeling—the same...they really understand...we have been chosen to be a part of this program for one reason

Ronnie appreciates having found a space where others share similar values and feelings about their communities. The Youth Policy Institute provides

Only when we are able to look past their singular constructs of what it means to be successful can we lift the prospects of those on the margins and celebrate the influence on our society writ large.



Many Black and Latino males are frequently left outside of the narrow confines of success, despite behaving in ways that are laudable outside their classrooms.

teenagers an opportunity to foster relationships with their peers. These programs focus on Black and Latino youth, where they can benefit from the individual attention and support to push and reach for larger goals. The young men who were participants in those programs stressed that they were able to form meaningful relationships with program managers, volunteers, and youth workers, but also peers who are not involved in violence or gang activities. The increased personal benefits he acquired may carry over to becoming a self-advocate in higher education.

Edwin from South Los Angeles stated sports and recreational areas are critical for his health and overall well-being:

I like basketball...it helps me out...to get out my stress...to get my mind off of things...and it's huge emotionally [relief]...it's like a huge advantage for me to keep off the bad things to the side...it helps me not focus on violence in my neighborhood or gangs

Edwin used basketball to avoid gangs and violence in his neighborhood. Other students are members of scholarship programs, where they receive pre-college counseling and participate in a summer college preparation program. These programs help supplement the college information the students are building in high school.

South Central Scholars, a program centered towards minority youth in the urban community... it's like a scholarship, but they have a summer program at USC...it helps you academically and they teach you how to work

Mario highlights the role of the scholarship program in providing access to social and navigational capital, to receive job training and also to understand how to use the new information to maneuver new spaces.

Safety/External Pressures

One of the challenges all of these young men may face are the social dangers in their given neighborhoods. The importance of safety and an escape from community pressures is vital to identifying and supporting for the young men in this study. The Black and Latino males talked about how such spaces provided a distraction from negative experiences they sometimes witness. Other students are able to learn from close-aged peers or older adults and build connections which may not be available at home.

Kenneth, in the example below, shares how he builds various forms of capital through relationships with older adults on the basketball courts. He is able to learn how the world works and how to anticipate new challenges in their communities.

The gym. I go play basketball...[the older Black and Brown men] they keep me away from any negativity in the streets. People that are older than me, talk to me let me know how the world would already [work] outside of school.

Luis offers an example of how his local elementary school provides a safe environment to avoid violence in his community.

And [the elementary school] would distract me from everything negative going on, it's a bad neighborhood [where I live], there's always something violent going on. I would go to the elementary school to play basketball by myself... sometimes I would go run next to the school because I felt safe next to the school...

SUMMARY

- Students used personal experiences and environment (e.g., churches, community pools, Boys & Girls Clubs) to build their resilience and focus on their long-term goals of not being enticed into gangs and/or violence;
- The young men volunteered in multiple formal and informal programs through school clubs, local churches, or community centers. These opportunities opened new perspectives and understanding of their role in improving individual communities;
- The students used local parks, sports, school-based programs, and community organizations to avoid violence and gangs in their communities. These spaces provided either opportunities to focus on physical outlets (through sports), emotional well-being (self-confidence), or to build friendships with like-minded peers; and
- The importance of older male figures and involvement in organized programs provided a "sense of safety" from potential involvement in trouble. The shared understanding between Black and Latino male high school students and older members of the community heightened the students' eagerness to form strong bonds with others who understand their trials and tribulations and to have a larger network of positive figures in their lives.

Recommendations

SCHOOLS

The school section captured the ways that school personnel and organizations supported students at the various school sites. However, not every student or school had access to the same resources. Schools striving to support Black and Latino males should assess the ways these students are being afforded opportunities to learn. Drawing from the voices of the young men that we spoke to, the research team recommends six ways for schools to further support Black and Latino male students.

1. Teacher-student relationships beyond the classroom. School administrators, teachers, and staff should make the effort to learn about the homes of these young men and the cultural wealth they hold, in order to understand students beyond the classroom. While we understand that teachers have lessons to plan, assignments to grade, and lives of their own, the young men in our study praised the teachers and staff who cared about them, invested in them, went the extra mile to get to know them, inquired about their personal lives, and even took on mentoring roles in their lives. Schools serve as a second home for many of our participants, and as such, school administrators, teachers, and staff should be intentional in developing a culture of care, concern, and commitment to young men academically, socially and emotionally.

2. School and community organizations: providing social and emotional support. Students were exposed to diverse organizations, including community-based organizations at their school sites that met many of their needs. The organizations that were the most influential provided multidimensional support that kept students engaged in school, sustained and enhanced their interest in academics, and alleviated stress for students. We recommend that school organizations and community based organizations work in sync to consider the ways that provides students holistic support. A number of the young men spoke to the challenging home lives and communities they lived in. Mental health supports can make a notable difference for young men of color.

In addition, organizations may also need to partner with other organizations and resources to ensure that students' social and emotional needs are met.

3. Developing a school culture of success. Throughout the research, most students referenced an organization or person that contributed to their success. Missing from students' narratives were the ways that schools, as a whole, support students. Only one of the school sites was continuously referenced as having a school culture that contributed to student success. The school that developed a culture and support system for academic success encouraged all students to do well in school. Additionally, students remarked that the school provided care and support that went beyond a few individuals but was embedded in the organization of the school. This example provides the possibility of having a school culture that provides a framework for students to be successful. For young males of color to be successful, school policies, practices, and procedures need to be geared toward

Throughout the research, most students referenced an organization or person that contributed to their success.





What became quite clear in this work was that success needs to be reimagined in schools.

the success of all students, not heavily centered on punitive actions, and connected to school-home-community engagement.

4. Challenge traditional notions of masculinity for Black and Latino males.

Educational practitioners and school leaders need to celebrate a shift towards progressive masculinity and acknowledge the humanness and feelings of these young men; their desire to love and be loved, and the care they express for their families, friends, and other loved ones. They need to challenge stereotypes about young Black and Latino men in the classroom and create safe classrooms where students are willing and comfortable expressing their feelings. Recognizing the prevalence of diverse masculinities is critical in creating a caring school climate for males of color. The young men in this study were not afraid to show their vulnerabilities and emotions and challenge rigid ideas of masculinity.

5. Recognize Black and Latino male resiliency.

Resiliency and altruism were evident throughout the voices of the participants. Administrators, teachers, and policymakers would be wise to acknowledge the grit, perseverance, and life situations of Black and Latino males and provide support services that amplify the positive outcomes associated with these characteristics. For instance, teachers can utilize pedagogy that invites students to reflect upon their own life challenges, tie these to the experiences of others, and recognize the strength inherent in facing difficulties. Administrators and policymakers can look to develop policies regarding attendance, testing, and other demands associated with student life. Black and Latino males serve numerous roles within and beyond their tasks as students.

6. Rethinking school success.

While many of the young men in our study held grade point averages that were 3.0 and above, not all did. While many of the young men in the study were taking rigorous college preparatory courses, not all did. Nonetheless, what became quite clear in this work was that success needs to be reimagined in schools. All of the young men in this study showed uncanny promise and leadership, participated in extracurricular activities, helped their peers at school, and demonstrated success in a multitude of ways. Moreover, it is important for schools to help personnel see the numerous ways that many young men of color manifest their brilliance, intellect, and promise.

COMMUNITY

The value and influence of community on young people cannot be overstated. According to our data, communities have a significant impact on the lives of young Black and Latino men in this study. The young men informed us about how they searched for mentors and like-minded peers in local parks, community centers, churches, and informal and organized sports, and through volunteer experiences. These mentors and peers serve to help the Black and Latino males focus on positivity instead of being drawn into violence and gangs in their surrounding communities. Among the recommendations that we would make are the following:

- Providing Black and Latino males opportunities to volunteer in structured school or community based programs to broaden their interest and involvement to positively change their community would be vital. Efforts tied to community enhancement and improvement seem to have particular appeal to the young men we spoke to in our work. Throughout our study, the young men talked about the levels of satisfaction and enjoyment they received from ventures centered on giving back and helping others.
- Legislators may want to consider additional investments in local parks and gang prevention programs focused on Black and Latino males to steer students from gang involvement. Throughout our conversations, the young men talked about the pervasiveness of gangs in their community. They discussed having to steer clear of gangs, the need to be aware of particular neighborhoods, and talked about why structured afterschool activities were important for them to be able to remain at school premises after hours.
- Throughout our interviews the young men talked about the critical role that sports played in their success. Thus, any programmatic efforts that focus on sports and youth development should not only remain in place but should be provided additional supports. Elementary and middle schools should provide afterhours sports or community building programs for local Black and Latino teenagers. Moreover, while our participants talked about the importance of sports, they also said that activities that offered mentoring young men in sports were important as well.

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Thank you to our research team



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SCHOOL DEMOGRAPHICS

Pasadena Blair High School

Blair High School is located in Pasadena, California, just 15 minutes from downtown Los Angeles and is considered to be a more affluent city; the median household income in Pasadena is \$68,172 (2013) compared to the national household average of \$51,939. The city also boasts the highest number of private schools per capita due to a court ruling. In 1970, a court ordered the city's once well-regarded school district to desegregate. Rather than have their kids go to school with the mostly Black kids from the Northwest, the city's upper class and wealthy people pulled their children out of the public school system. Blair High and Middle School is an authorized International Baccalaureate (IB) Middle Years Program, which provides the framework for an integrated and international philosophy that is supported by academic rigor and opportunities to explore and learn about the world outside the immediate community. The IBMYP was authorized at Blair IB School in October 2002. Blair High and Middle School was authorized to offer the IB Diploma Program in April of 2007. Blair High School is one of 28 schools in the Pasadena Unified School District. According to U.S. News, Blair High School is unranked.

■ Total Student Body: 1,153

■ Racial Breakdown:

- ◆ Black/African American: 25%
- ◆ Hispanic: 56%
- ◆ Asian: 8%
- ◆ White: 8%
- ◆ Two or more: 3%

■ Free and Reduced Lunch Assistance:

- ◆ Eligible: 59%
- ◆ Not Eligible: 31%
- ◆ Reduced Price: 10%

■ Performance Index (API) (2013):

- ◆ Schoolwide: 904
- ◆ Black/African American: 227
- ◆ Hispanic/Latino: 498
- ◆ Socioeconomically disadvantaged: 698

■ Weighted 3-Year API (2011–2013):

- ◆ Schoolwide: 710
- ◆ Black/African American: 696
- ◆ Hispanic/Latino: 682
- ◆ Socioeconomically disadvantaged: 680

Westchester Enriched Sciences Magnet High School

Westchester Enriched Sciences Magnet High School (WESM) is a public magnet school within the Los Angeles Unified School district located in the Westchester region of Los Angeles County. The majority of students at WESM are People of Color with nearly 75% identifying as African American and close to 20% identifying as Latino/a. Despite the school demographics, WESM is actually located in a historically and predominantly white neighborhood in Los Angeles situated near the Los Angeles International Airport and Loyola Marymount University. Black males account for 40% of the student population. Historically, WESM has enrolled one of the largest black male student populations in the state. Almost half of the students in the school are labeled socio-economically disadvantaged. In recent years the school has restructured and currently consists of a magnet school model with a health and science focus. The shift to a magnet focus has not been without controversy within the community. Despite this fact, within WESM warm staff and teachers work tirelessly with the students. A counselor runs the college readiness center and consistently encourages students to absorb and engage with information about higher education.

■ Total Student Body: 1,247

■ Racial Breakdown:

- ◆ Black/African American: 72.9%
- ◆ Hispanic/Latino: 16.7%
- ◆ White: 5.7%
- ◆ APIA: 2.5%
- ◆ American Indian: 0.7%
- ◆ Two or more races: 1.5%

■ Free and Reduced Lunch Assistance:

- ◆ Eligible: 38%
- ◆ Not Eligible: 56%
- ◆ Reduced Price: 6%

■ Growth API (2013)

- ◆ Schoolwide: 704
- ◆ Black/African American: 679
- ◆ Hispanic/Latino: 741
- ◆ Socioeconomically Disadvantaged: 686

■ Weighted 3-Year API (2011–2013)

- ◆ Schoolwide: 689
- ◆ Black/African American: 662
- ◆ Hispanic/Latino: 734
- ◆ Socioeconomically Disadvantaged: 674

King Drew Magnet High School

King Drew Magnet High School of Medicine and Science (King-Drew) is a competitive magnet school that serves over 1,500 primarily low-income Latino and African American students. King-Drew excels in providing students a competitive academic environment, where almost 70 percent of the students are college eligible (A-G requirements) and is well above the district average for high school completion rates. Apart from King-Drew's academic curriculum, the school has strategic partnerships with multiple hospitals and clinics throughout the community, including UCLA Hospital and the Veterans Affairs Clinics, to provide additional learning opportunities for students. The school is located in a low-to-middle-class suburb of Los Angeles, where the median household income in 2014 was \$33,678 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014). Lastly, less than 40 percent of the students are males and over 80% of all students have high aspirations to attend some postsecondary education institution in the future.

■ Total Student Body: 1,563

■ Racial Breakdown:

- ◆ Black/African American: 45%
- ◆ Hispanic/Latino: 53%
- ◆ White: 1%

■ Free and Reduced Lunch Assistance:

- ◆ Eligible: 70%
- ◆ Not Eligible: 21%
- ◆ Reduced Price: 9%

■ Growth API (2013):

- ◆ Schoolwide: 1,226
- ◆ Black/African American: 603
- ◆ Hispanic/Latino: 609
- ◆ Socioeconomic disadvantaged: 1,031

■ Weighted 3-Year API (2011–2013):

- ◆ Schoolwide: 784
- ◆ Black/African American: 763
- ◆ Hispanic/Latino: 805
- ◆ Socioeconomic disadvantaged: 785

Long Beach Polytechnic High School

Long Beach Polytechnic High School in California has a history of being recognized for its competitive academic and athletic program. This is evidenced by the school consistently being recognized as one of the top 100 high schools in the nation by Newsweek magazine. In 2011, Poly was identified by Sports Illustrated as the top athletic program in the nation. The juxtaposition of competitive athletic and academic programs creates a unique school culture that students are tasked with navigating. With a student population comprised of more of 4,400 students, not only is the school one of the largest in the state, but also historically the school is one of the most diverse schools in the nation. The school is located in a low-to-middle class city where the median income in 2012 was \$47,837 and the current unemployment is 9.7%. The school is comprised of a number of small learning communities (academies) that track students based on interests or by admission requirements. It is within this context that Black and Latino males are seeking to achieve success.

■ Total Student Body: 4,464

■ Racial Breakdown:

- ◆ Hispanic/Latino: 36.6%
- ◆ Asian: 17.8%
- ◆ Black/African American: 23.2%
- ◆ White: 11.6%
- ◆ Pacific Islander: 2.3%,
- ◆ Filipino: 6.3%
- ◆ Two or More: 1.5%

■ Free and Reduced Lunch:

- ◆ Eligible: 50%
- ◆ Not Eligible: 44%
- ◆ Reduced Price: 7%

■ Growth API (2011-2013):

- ◆ Schoolwide: 764
- ◆ Black/African American: 693
- ◆ Hispanic/Latino: 717
- ◆ Socioeconomically disadvantaged: 710

■ Weighted 3-Year API (2011–2013):

- ◆ Schoolwide: 753
- ◆ Black/African American: 683
- ◆ Hispanic/Latino: 700
- ◆ Socioeconomically disadvantaged: 695

George Washington Preparatory High School

George Washington Preparatory High School is a public 4-year high school in the Westmont section of unincorporated Los Angeles County, California and was founded in 1926. The school has a Los Angeles address but is not located in the city limits of Los Angeles. It serves many areas in South Los Angeles and unincorporated areas around South Los Angeles, including Athens, West Athens, and Westmont. In addition it serves the LAUSD section of Hawthorne. It was the location for a 1986 TV movie entitled Hard Lessons, depicting Denzel Washington as the new principal, who sets out to rid the school of gang violence and drugs and restore educational values to the school. A famous former principal is George McKenna, whom Denzel Washington portrayed in the movie Hard Lessons.

At this site, the gold mine is the college center. Students walk in and out of the college center for academic and personal advice, to study, or simply to hang out with the college counselor and other peers during lunch. Brochures for programs like Upward Bound, posters advertising Historically Black Colleges and Universities, public and private universities, summer programs, and scholarship opportunities are laid out on tables and posted on the walls of the office. Pictures of students who have been admitted to colleges are displayed on the wall with their letters of acceptance. The college center, as well as the young men's caring teachers and counselors, are crucial to the overall success of the students at Washington Prep.

■ Total Student Body: 1,465

■ Racial Breakdown:

- ◆ Black/African American: 55%
- ◆ Hispanic/Latino: 44%
- ◆ Other: 1%

■ Free and Reduced Lunch Assistance:

- ◆ Eligible: 78%
- ◆ Not Eligible: 19%
- ◆ Reduced Price: 3%

■ Growth API (2013):

- ◆ Schoolwide: 590
- ◆ Black/African American: 550
- ◆ Hispanic/Latino: 632
- ◆ Socioeconomically disadvantaged: 590

■ Weighted 3-Year API (2011–2013)

- ◆ Schoolwide: 572
- ◆ Black/African American: 543
- ◆ Hispanic/Latino: 601
- ◆ Socioeconomically disadvantaged: 571

Social Justice Humanitas Academy

Social Justice Humanitas Academy (SJHA) is a small public high school located in a predominately low-income Latino community in the San Fernando Valley. About five years ago, local teachers developed the school as a social justice themed, teacher-led, and student centered campus. At the heart of the school is a campus-wide culture that contributes to student success, which has benefited its Latino and Black male students. The school provides support systems that goes beyond a “few caring adults” but instead involves the campus community, encouraging student academic success through a social justice mission. School leadership, teachers, and staff provide care and support exceeds beyond the bell and job duties. Instead, adult interactions with youth provide academic, social, emotional, and personalized support that students credited as leading to their success in school. In addition, the school has clubs and organizations; partners with local universities, community based organizations, local businesses, and organizations that meet students’ academic, justice-oriented, artistic, and other needs. Lastly, the school has received recognition from the district for student success and community engagement.

■ Total Student Body: 506

■ Racial Breakdown:

- ◆ Hispanic/Latino: 95.5%
- ◆ Black/African American: 2.8%
- ◆ White: 1.4%
- ◆ American Indian: 0.2%

■ Free and Reduced Lunch:

- ◆ Eligible: 68%
- ◆ Not Eligible: 24%
- ◆ Reduced Price: 7%

■ Growth API (2013)

- ◆ Schoolwide: 708
- ◆ Black/African American: 551
- ◆ Hispanic/Latino: 715
- ◆ Socioeconomically Disadvantaged: 718



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